Highlights of the May, 2007 FDP Meeting

Export Controls Symposium

The formal FDP meeting was preceded on May 23 and the morning of May 24 by a symposium on Export Controls jointly organized by the US State Department, Johns Hopkins University and the FDP. The overall purpose of the symposium was to provide researchers and research administrators with a better understanding of the rules and regulations concerning the conduct of research when foreign countries and foreign nationals are involved. The symposium was attended by about 200 people. The agenda and the presentations can be found at http://www.thefdp.org/exp_controls_presentations.html.

Although some presentations and discussions at this symposium focused on issues, regulations, and processes of interest primarily to administrators, several issues of importance to faculty were also considered. Some restrictions extend beyond military technologies, to include equipment such as laptop computers and also to some commercial software. Sanctions in place at the treasury department restrict faculty members in the US from engaging in some routine scholarly interactions involving individuals from certain countries. These can include reviewing and editing of manuscripts submitted for publication. Timothy Smith discussed issues related to visas for foreign nationals coming to study or attend meetings in the US. Faculty should take note of some points raised in Alex Lopes' talk on "deemed exports" which dealt with the transfer of technology to foreign nationals in the United States, a category that includes foreign students and scholars. Deemed exports of technology could occur in the classroom, or research, or even during tours of laboratories.

FDP Meeting

The agenda and presentations for the main meeting can be found at http://www.thefdp.org/May_2007_meeting.html.

Export Controls Plenary
The first morning of the FDP followed up on the symposium, with an Export Controls Plenary Session in which three presenters gave an institutional perspective on Export Controls and the challenges associated with them. These presentations included several discussions of issues of importance to faculty, including the implications of grant/contract clauses restricting publication (which remove projects from the fundamental research exemption and allow restrictions on technology transfers), traveling with restricted equipment, and points to consider when training foreign students and hosting foreign scholars. The powerpoints can be found at (http://www.thefdp.org/may_2007_export_controls_plenary.ppt) These presentations were followed by a Q&A session.

Post-Award Finance and Audit Open Forum

Rich Andrews, University of California – Irvine and Debbie Rafi, Office of Naval Research hosted a session where FDP members were updated on the status of current initiatives and asked for suggestions/recommendations on initiatives that need to be considered by the FDP. The issues raised for consideration included those discussed in the draft "Non-valued Added White Paper" and IRAB Suggestion List generated from the beginning efforts of the IRAB task force.

In a new format, lunch on May 24 was organized as with 5 informal Lunch Forums at which participants met to discuss topics of interest. These sessions ran in parallel with the Faculty lunch forum, and drew some faculty from the faculty meeting because of their interest in the topics.

Faculty Lunch Forum

At the Faculty Lunch Forum, Sara Rockwell, Faculty Co-Chair of the FDP, opened the session by welcoming everybody in attendance and then gave a brief update on the Faculty Burden Survey. The survey is available for download at http://www.thefdp.org/Faculty_Committee.html#P11_2305 and bound copies have been sent to key people at the National Academies, the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the Committee on Science, the AAU, AAMC, AAAS, and FASEB. A lot of interest has been generated by the Faculty Survey Burden and the FDP Executive Committee is investigating the possibility of conducting more data mining as a basis for generating "best practices" around some of the more burdensome activities.

Sandy Schneider, Division Director, Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences, gave an update on the Human Subjects Research Subcommittee (HSRS) of the National Science and Technology Council Committee on Science, which includes representatives from all Federal Agencies that fund Human Subjects research. …. Sara Rockwell and David Wright attended a meeting of the HSRS to introduce them to the FDP and highlight the overlapping interests of the two groups. The groups share a common interest in fully protecting human subjects, while streamlining the review and approval procedures and documentation both at the local institutions and at the federal agencies so as to minimize unnecessary administrative burdens. Sara and David offered to help the committee whenever the unique resources of the FDP might be of value, for example in surveying schools or faculty for information on problems or best practices. The findings from the faculty burden survey were presented briefly. The committee members requested a copy of the full survey, and the link to the survey on the FDP website was provided.

On a separate note, Sandy also alerted the group to activities within NSF to develop a new Science of Science and Innovation Policy (SciSIP), which aims to develop the foundations of an evidence-based platform from which policymakers and researchers may assess the impacts of the nation's scientific and engineering enterprise, and improve their understanding of its dynamics and predict outcomes. More information about SciSIP can be found at http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/scisip/scisip_prospec.pdf.

Sara Rockwell led a discussion around increasing the attendance and active participation of the Faculty Representatives from FDP Institutions. One proposal being considered is asking each Institution to nominate an "alternate Faculty Representative". This will hopefully increase Faculty attendance and will also provide the official Faculty Representative with someone else to work with on their own campus and could also provide an opportunity to groom his or her successor. The suggestion was made that formal attendance criterion for Faculty should be included in Phase V.

FDP Updates and Announcements

Jean Feldman from NSF gave an update (http://www.thefdp.org/may_2007_rppr_update.ppt) on the development of a Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR). This RPPR proposal is an initiative of the Research Business Models (RBM) Subcommittee of the Committee on Science (CoS), a Committee of the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) and its objective is to establish a uniform format for reporting performance on Federally-funded research projects. A draft document has been developed and after receiving a wide range of comments a revised draft RPPR is now being reviewed by OSTP and OMB. The FDP were actively involved in this comment period and Steve Dowdy (MIT), Gunta Liders

(University of Rochester) and William Olbricht (Cornell) participated in a web cast facilitated by the Grants Policy Committee on March 8th in which they gave input on the RPPR from an IT, administrative, and faculty perspective, respectively.

Mike Olsen gave an update on the new Federal Financial Report with which OMB hopes to consolidate the current Financial Status Report (SF-269 and SF-269A) with the Federal Cash Transactions Report (SF-272 and SF-272A). Over 200 comments from Federal agencies and a wide range of recipients including institutions of higher education and associations representing academic institutions were received and a final version is presently under development.

Lore Anne McNicol, NIH, gave an update on NIH Streamlining activities (http://www.thefdp.org/may_2007_admin_streamlining_update.ppt), which were initiated in response to issues raised by the FDP membership. A great deal of progress has been made over the past year or so on some of the items listed as being High Priority. These include: (i) Definition of effort and salary on K awards; (ii) Timing to honor indirect cost rate changes; and (iii) Consistency in expanded authorities on training grants. A detailed account of what is being addressed and what has already been achieved can be found at the link listed above.

FDP Strategic Plan for Phase V

Dick Seligman, CALTECH, presented the FDP Strategic Plan for Phase V (http://www.thefdp.org/phase_5_strat_plan.pdf). The main themes for the next phase are to maximize the time available for Principal Investigators and scientific staff to focus on research while reducing unnecessary administrative burden and to increase the efficiency of administrative and compliance practices while reducing inefficient or redundant agency and institutional procedures and practices. The draft plan also highlights 4 goals:

1. Successfully complete a minimum of five internally generated high priority projects.
2. Maintain effective forum for ongoing collaboration to address current and emerging external issues
3. Develop and implement effective strategy for communicating and engaging key stakeholders
4. Ensure that the FDP has the right membership and structure to carry out its mission in Phase 5.

The document referenced above contains a more detailed discussion on each of these 4 goals and we encourage you to read the information it contains. The members of the FDP were asked to adopt the principles of the Strategic Plan, which they did with a unanimous vote. The Executive Committee will use the Strategic Plan to start making the appropriate preparations for Phase V.

Members of the FDP were reminded to provide feedback on this strategic plan and on potential plans for Phase V, which will be discussed further at a meeting of the executive committee in Washington on July 31.

Federal Agency Updates

In the NIH update (http://www.thefdp.org/may_2007_nih_update.ppt) Joe Ellis announced a few personnel changes in Office of Extramural Research and in OPERA. Joe also indicated that the Notice of Award should now be received as a PDF attachment to an email to improve the formatting and functionality of the document. NIH expects to stop the mailing of hard copy NOAs by the end of 2007. The NIH has stopped publishing its yearly "Rankings" list and has replaced it with a web-based searchable database where individuals can look up the awards information for a specific institution. Joe also spoke

about a new initiative to determine whether Institutions have fully implemented procedures to address the Financial Conflict of Interest regulations. In FY06 NIH conducted 18 site reviews and intend to continue this through the next fiscal year. Finally there have been a few updates to the eSubmission timeline and some changes made to the functionality of the NIH Commons.

Charisse Carney-Nunes gave an update (http://www.thefdp.org/may_2007_ffata.ppt) on the Grants & the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006. This is a new law passed in 2006 that requires a website be developed where the public can determine the amount of Federal funding a particular institution receives including, by 2009, all subcontracts and subgrants. In order to gather the data on subcontracts and subgrants recipient organizations are going to be required to report certain data within 30 days of receipt. This could be a particularly onerous task for some institutions with large complex grants and they will be able to charge the cost of collecting the required data to the award as an allowable cost.

Committee and Task Force – Concurrent Session 1

Terms and Conditions: Jean Feldman, NSF and Mike Ludwig, Purdue University hosted a session to update FDP members as to the status of the Research Terms and Conditions.

NSF Fastlane Publication Citations Enhancement: Maureen Miller, National Science Foundation, gave a brief presentation on an initiative to permit Principal Investigators to search from within Fastlane for citations associated with their award so that they can easily attach them to their progress reports. The site looked extremely easy to use and there were very few comments from those present at this demonstration.

Audit Committee: James P. Becker, Indiana University and Lynn Johnson, Colorado State University hosted a session where interested FDP members got to preview the website for the A133 Demonstration. This demonstration is using a web site to collect information about institutions annual A-133 research audits and trying to use that information to monitor subrecipients compliance. If this project goes as planned, it will greatly reduce the burden on administrators in gather this data.

Committee and Task Force – Concurrent Session 2

NSF's GMLoB consortium: research.gov Progress and Plans: David Saunders, Kim Deutsch, Stacie Boyd, National Science Foundation, and Rick Howington, USDA/Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service hosted a session regarding the progress made on research.gov, which aims to streamline the research community's access to grants information and services for multiple federal agencies.

Faculty Committee: Sara Rockwell opened the session notifying those present that in response to the Faculty Burden Survey FASEB had approached the FDP about its ongoing Conflict of Interest in Research activities. With funding from the *ORI-AAMC RCR Program for Academic Societies to Promote Research Integrity* FASEB has been trying to increase awareness on the part of investigators (investigators as a group determines the effectiveness of policies and practices) and call for implementation of more consistent voluntary policies and practices for the management of academic-industry relationships (the lack of clarity and consistency in some areas may cause confusion and misunderstanding by investigators). FASEB has also been working on a "Conflict of Interest Toolkit" that will contain resources for the community and help guide individual financial relationships between academia and industry. FASEB would like to engage

the FDP to ensure that appropriate Faculty input is garnered in the development of this toolkit and to help keep the administrative burden associated with the proposed policies and procedures to a minimum. Joe Konstan and Sara Rockwell were involved in a conference call and Carol Liedtke will attend a meeting July 17 at the National Academies entitled "Managing Financial Relationships between Academia and Industry in Biomedical Research".

William Olbricht then gave a brief summary of his comments made during the Webcast hosted by the Grants Policy Committee on the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR). Briefly, Bill indicated that: (i) the Form Instructions were too long at 12 pages; (ii) the forms took on a very NSF flavor so many of the terms commonly used by NIH were absent (e.g. Specific Aims); (iii) the ability to allow Agencies to add their own form pages may simply result in the old forms being reused as pages added to the new form; (iv) and that there needs to be uniform use of terms throughout the document. In general Bill thought having a unified progress report across all Federal Agencies was a good idea.

The committee then discussed what the next steps should be regarding the Faculty Burden Survey. Joe Konstan and Bob Decker have agreed to write a 2-page white paper focusing on key findings of the survey and a potential Demonstration is which participant institutions would be permitted to re-budget direct costs to pay for a Project Coordinator. The intent is to submit this white paper to OMB for comment to determine if such a Demonstration would be worth pursuing. In addition there was general agreement that the data needed to be mined more to determine which institutions scored extremely well in a couple of key areas such as IRB and IACUC. The FDP could then work with these institutions to draft "best practice" documents that could be used as a foundation for future Demonstrations.

The agenda for the September meeting was also discussed at some length and it was decided that an attempt would be made to arrange a plenary panel session that would probe the reasons why some institutions required detail budgets on modular grant submission while others required that information only at the time of award. The intent is to have Faculty and Administrative Representatives from each "faction" give a short statement about their situation and then open the discussion up to the floor. David Robinson agreed to organize this session.

Finally, the committee discussed ways to increase Faculty Participation at FDP meetings. A number of suggestions were made including: (i) allowing institutions to nominate an alternate Faculty Representative; (ii) invite more noteworthy guests to address the faculty; (iii) survey the faculty who are not attending regularly to determine the reasons behind their absence; (iv) publish the agenda and meeting dates earlier; and (v) making Faculty attendance a requirement in Phase V. More discussion on these suggestions and others will be conducted in the monthly Faculty Standing Committee conference calls and an update will be given at the September meeting.

Committee and Task Force – Concurrent Session 3

Grants.gov Update: Michael Pellegrino from Grants.gov gave a detailed update (http://www.thefdp.org/may_2007_grants_gov.ppt) on the progress of eSubmissions to grant awarding Federal Agencies through grants.gov. In FY07 there have been 109,003 eSubmissions through grants.gov making the total submissions since grants.gov went live 208,263. There have been marked improvements in the Help Desk responding to and finding solutions for people who call in. Michael gave a very high level update on the system enhancements that were scheduled for FY07 with some already being completed while others are still in progress. Probably the most important enhancement is the migration

from the use of PureEdge to a system based on the Adobe Acrobat engine. This system will be truly platform independent and will also include many enhancements that should improve usability. There will also be enhancements to the system-to-system structure which has received over 4,000 applications to date in FY07. Michael also indicated that there had been updates to the training material located on their website (http://www.grants.gov/help/user_guides.jsp) as well as to the website itself (http://www.grants.gov/).

Subawards: Mary Kirker, Branch Chief, Grants Management Branch, NIAID, National Institutes of Health and Dr. F. Gray Handley, Associate Director, Office of Global Research, NIAID, National Institutes of Health hosted a session addressing issues involving research in resource-poor countries.

Committee and Task Force – Concurrent Session 4

Grants.gov Suggested Enhancements: Bob Beattie, University of Michigan and Tammy Custer, Cornell University hosted a session to examine enhancements suggested to Grants.gov at previous meetings and what progress had been made to address issues raised in the past. The list contained 27 items that were categorized into "Forms and System Problems" and "Grants.gov Communication Issues". While many of the items had not been addressed satisfactorily there were a number that had been resolved completely or where progress had been made towards a resolution. It also appears to be the case that some of the issues will go away when PureEdge is replaced by the Adobe Acrobat based system. Bob and others have also been doing some early user testing on the new Adobe system to ensure that it works appropriately on non-MS Windows based platforms. This will be important for faculty who use Macs.

Contracts: Alexandra A. McKeown, University of Maryland; Carol Zuiches University of Washington; and Rosemary Hamill, National Institutes of Health hosted a session the agenda for which can be found at http://thefdp.org/CONTRACTS_agenda_may_2007.pdf. Most of the discussion centered around a demonstration that is just underway to track clauses that are put into research contracts that pose problems for institutions and researchers. These clauses are tracked to see how, if at all, they were deleted, rewritten or in some other way altered to make it more palatable.

Security Model in Biomedical Research

Norka Ruiz-Bravo, NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research gave a presentation (http://www.thefdp.org/may_2007_research_models.ppt) about the importance of using animal models to biomedical research and the ability of NIH to fulfill its mission. The main thrust of the presentation was how increasingly aggressive actions by animal activist groups was threatening the progress of biomedical research and how NIH and institutions conducting animal research must work together more closely to overcome this serious challenge. We encourage you to read through the PowerPoint presentation listed above as it contains some excellent material that can be used to increase and improve educational activities at your institution.